



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 18, 2019

Sheriff Dale J Schmidt

Office: 920-386-4115

dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us

Swatting Suspect Charged

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office has conducted a thorough investigation of the facts surrounding the hoax phone call received by the Dodge County Sheriff's Office on March 22, 2018 that resulted in a SWAT deployment placing lives at risk in rural Dodge County.

Sheriff's Office Detective Andrew Rolfs in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies from around the country were able to identify a suspect, a 17 year old male juvenile from Youngstown, Ohio, however, we are not able to release the name of the juvenile suspect to the public. Investigations by law enforcement revealed that similar incidents occurred around the United States and the phone calls originated from Mahoning County, Ohio. As a result, the Mahoning County Prosecutor's Office agreed to handle all charges related to these crimes and 73 counts of delinquency were filed in Mahoning County (40 felonies and 33 misdemeanors).

Dodge County Sheriff Dale Schmidt indicated in 2018 that these incidents are very serious and will not be tolerated. While it may have taken time to bring charges, the perpetrator is being held accountable. It is the Sheriff's hope that the resolution of this case will dissuade others from trying this type of activity. The individual involved believed he would get away with inciting fear in our community and now faces significant repercussions.

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office would like to thank the Mahoning County Prosecutors Office along with all the other agencies who put significant time into this case and helped Detective Rolfs close this case. Additionally, Detective Rolfs deserves a great deal of credit for his hard work in resolving this case.

Original Press Release from March 22, 2018

Suspected Swatting Hoax

At 3:32 PM on Thursday, March 22, 2018, the Dodge County Sheriff's Office received a phone call from a male subject indicating that he had shot a male subject and had taken hostages at a residence in the area of US 151 and Forest Road between the cities of Beaver Dam and Columbus.

The sheriff's office responded to the scene and immediately took action to protect the public and make plans for entry to the home to rescue potential victims. US 151 was closed from County Highway G to County Highway S for about an hour for the safety of the motoring public. Dodge County SWAT was called and responded to the scene and undertook operations to ensure the safety of occupants in the house. The SWAT team was able to make contact with the homeowner and clear the

residence without incident and it was quickly confirmed that there was no shooting and no hostages were taken. Sheriff's deputies and the SWAT team did an excellent job of utilizing their training to quickly resolve the incident in a safe and effective manner. They take their training seriously and handled this situation as smoothly as could be expected. Their performance was supplemented also by the fantastic job of dispatchers in the communications center to coordinate the response. It became quickly evident that this was most likely what is called a SWATTING event.

Currently, my detectives are in contact with the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Department of Criminal Investigation as I have requested that they come in to assist my office in investigating this incident. These types of incidents are not only illegal, but they are dangerous and will not be tolerated. The sheriff's office and the Department of Justice will work diligently to follow leads wherever they take us. Not only do they put the motoring public in danger as our emergency responders are forced to respond in emergency mode to these incidents, but the resources that are pulled away from other areas of the county can limit the ability to respond to other emergencies. In fact, shortly after this incident was resolved, the sheriff's office responded to Fox Lake for a report of subjects who had fallen through the ice on the lake. Had our deputies still been tied up on the SWATTING call, it is quite possible that our deputies would not have been able to respond as quickly to that incident and lives could have been put further in jeopardy. The message to those who take these kinds of actions are, the Dodge County Sheriff's Office takes SWATTING incidents very seriously and they will not be tolerated.

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt.

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